

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00
INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 AID-05
TRSE-00 /081 W

-----042414 181305Z /44

O R 181220Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8357
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMCONSUL HONG KONG
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR
AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE
AMEMBASSY MANILA
AMEMBASSY PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BANGKOK 1857

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: SREF, TH
SUBJECT: ASSISTANT SECRETARY DERIAN'S TALK WITH THAI PRIME
MINISTER ON REFUGEES

SUMMARY: ASSISTANT SECRETARY DERIAN, ACCOMPANIED BY
AMBASSADOR AND DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARIES OAKLEL AND
SIEVERTS, MET WITH THAI PRIME MINISTER KRIANGSAK JAN. 16
FOR HOUR-LONG DISCUSSION FOCUSED PRIMARILY ON INDOCHINA
REFUGEE SITUATION AND HUMAN RIGHTS. KRIANGSAK'S MAIN
POINT WAS THAT U.S. AND OTHER ASYLUM COUNTRIES SHOULD
EXPEDITE THE MOVEMENT OF REFUGEES FROM THAILAND. END SUMMARY.

1. MS. DERIAN OPENED THE DISCUSSION WITH A REFERENCE TO
THE NEW PAROLE PROGRAM FOR 7,000 INDOCHINESE REFUGEES
AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT U.S. WOULD ESTABLISH
A PROGRAM TO ACCEPT REFUGEES ON A REGULAR BASIS.
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SHE NOTED THAT DESTINATION COUNTRIES NEED TO SEE
THAT TEMPORARY ASYLUM COUNTRIES ARE CONTINUING TO
ACCEPT REFUGEES, ADDING THAT ALTHOUGH "THAILAND HAS BEEN
GENEROUS, YOU SHOULD NOT HAVE INCIDENTS
NOW OF PUSHING BOATS OFF, WHICH WOULD DAMAGE YOUR
REPUTATION."

2. OAKLEY DESCRIBED HIS VISIT JANUARY 14 TO SONGKHLA WHERE A FEW HOURS AFTER HE LEFT A REFUGEE BOAT ARRIVED AND WAS GIVEN TEN MINUTES TO LEAVE OR "WE SHOOT." BOAT WAS FINALLY ALLOWED TO STAY BUT THIS EPISODE DEMONSTRATES THE FACT SOME OFFICIALS ARE NOT FOLLOWING THAI POLICY. KRIANGSAK NOTED THAT HE HAD LONG AGO MADE IT PUBLIC THAT IT WAS NOT THAI POLICY TO PUSH BOATS OUT TO SEA. OAKLEY ALSO REFERRED TO PROBLEMS IN GETTING FOOD TO REFUGEES AT THIS CAMP. IN THE FIRST 14 DAYS OF JANUARY, THE REFUGEES RECEIVED FOOD DELIVERIES ON 7 OF THEM.

3. DIR-GEN DAMRONG SUNTHONSARATHUN (DEPT OF LOCAL ADMINISTRATION) OF THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, ATTENDING THE MEETING, SAID HIS COUNTRY CAN ONLY GIVE TEMPORARY ASYLUM TO BOAT CASES, AND THAT THEY WANT TO SPEED DEPARTURES TO FRANCE AND THE U.S. HE MADE A FEEBLE DEFENSE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ON FEEDING ISSUE.

4. MS. DERIAN EMPHASIZED THAT BOAT CASES ARE THE KEY TO THE LAND CASES, BECAUSE THEY ARE MORE WIDELY PUBLICIZED. IF BOAT CASE REFUGEES ARE ACCEPTED IT WILL IMPROVE CHANCES FOR PROGRAMS FOR ALL. IN RESPONSE TO KRIANGSAK'S QUESTION, SHE DESCRIBED CONFIDENTIAL

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HER DISCUSSIONS ON THAT SUBJECT WITH LEE KUAN YEW, MARCOS AND SUHARTO, NOTING THAT, DESPITE LEE'S NEGATIVE ATTITUDE, WE STILL HOPE SINGAPORE WILL TAKE 300 AS A START. KRIANGSAK SAID HE WAS GOING TO SINGAPORE AND OTHER ASEAN COUNTRIES SOON, AND DERIAN SUGGESTED HE DISCUSS THIS SUBJECT WITH LEE AND OTHER LEADERS.

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O R 181220Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BANGKOK 1857

5. KRIANGSAK SAID THAI POLICY TOWARD REFUGEES CONTINUES TO BE HUMANITARIAN BASED ON BUDDHIST PRINCIPLES. HE NOTED, HOWEVER, THAT HIS COUNTRY HAS 95,000 INDOCHINESE REFUGEES AND 5,000 BURMESE REFUGEES AND URGED THAT US DO MORE TO HELP, STATING "I AM NOT HAPPY TO HAVE THEM IN CAMPS WHERE THEY ARE TREATED LIKE POW'S. WE HAVE PLANS TO RESETTLE THEM AND HOPE FOR INTERNATIONAL ASSISTANCE. WE HAVE TO CONSIDER OUR CAPABILITIES, AND THIS PROBLEM IS A DIFFICULT ONE FOR US TO MANAGE. BUT FROM THE HEART OF THE THAI PEOPLE, WE ARE READY TO HELP -- WE HOPE YOU CAN SHARE THE BURDEN."

6. KRIANGSAK ALSO SAID THAT US AND FRANCE SHOULD NOT TAKE ALL THE CREAM, SUCH AS DOCTORS AND PROFESSIONALS, LEAVING THE LEAST QUALIFIED REFUGEES IN THAILAND.
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HE ALSO SAID HE WOULD ASK THE INTERIOR MINISTRY TO LOOK INTO THE FOOD PROBLEM RAISED BY OAKLEY AND HE MADE CLEAR THAT INSTRUCTIONS WITH REGARD TO NOT RPT NOT TURNING AWAY BOATS WOULD BE REAFFIRMED.

7. PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WAS GLAD MS DERIAN WOULD VISIT REFUGEE CAMPS AROUND THE COUNTRY AND MS DERIAN THANKED HIM FOR ARRANGEMENTS MADE BY THE THAI AUTHORITIES. SHE ALSO SAID SHE WOULD BE TESTIFYING BEFORE CONGRESS ON INDOCHINESE REFUGEES ON JANUARY 24 AND WOULD DISCUSS WITH THE CONGRESS THE SAME QUESTIONS SHE HAD REVIEWED WITH THE PRIME MINISTER.

8. IN CLOSING THE PRIME MINISTER SAID HE WOULD BE

TRAVELLING TO ASEAN COUNTRIES NEXT MONTH AND TO CHINA IN MARCH. HE ASKED WHAT MS DERIAN PLANNED TO SAY TO THE PRESS AND SHE SAID SHE WOULD NOT GO INTO DETAILS NOTING THAT SHE NEVER QUOTED WHAT PEOPLE SAID TO HER. SHE SAID THAT SHE WOULD BE GLAD TO MEET WITH THE PRESS IN THAILAND BUT SHE NEVER GAVE INTERVIEWS IN COUNTRIES WHERE THE PRESS WAS CONTROLLED. THE PRIME MINISTER NOTED THAT THE PRESS IN THAILAND "IS DIFFERENT FROM THE PHILIPPINES."

9. SEPTTEL WILL REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS ASPECT OF DISCUSSION.
WHITEHOUSE

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